THE

INQUISITOR;

OR,

INVISIBLE RAMBLER.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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INQUISITOR;

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INVISIBLE RAMBLER.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By Mrs. ROWSON,

AUTHOR OF VICTORIA.

VOL. III.

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THE INQUISITOR.

ANNIE'S STORY.

IT was on a fine evening, the latter end of May, when tired with the fatigues of the day, for ſhe was a miliner's apprentice, Annie obtained leave of her miſtreſs to walk out for a little air.——Her miſtreſs had a ſhop which ſhe occupied, and frequently viſited

during the ſummer ſeaſon, ſituated on the banks of the Thames.

Annie ſtrayed toward the water ſide. Some venerable trees grew on the banks, forming a covert from the ſun at noon; and, by their interwoven branches, inſpiring a ſort of pleaſing melancholy in the gray twilight of the evening.

Annie was a ſentimental girl — ſhe loved ſolitude, poetry, and muſic. — With a mind ſoftened by the remembrance of ſome former occurrences of her life, and ſpirits calmed, but not depreſſed, by the ſolemn ſilence and ſerenity of every thing around her, ſhe wandered on, meditating on the

happy ſtate of thoſe who were in a ſituation to enjoy unmoleſted the darling pleaſures of reading, meditation, and friendſhip.

Whether love had any ſhare in her thoughts at that moment, I never could get her to confeſs—but, whether a ſentimental young woman, wandering in a ſolitary walk, and contemplating the works of nature, might not naturally enough wiſh for a boſom friend to participate in her pleaſures, and join in an innocent converſation, I leave to my fair readers to determine — to be ſure ſhe might wiſh for a female companion; very likely ſhe did; but it is a point I never could determine.

In this ſhady walk Annie was accoſted by Mr. Winlove.

Mr. Winlove was a gentleman of fortune, to whoſe family Annie had been recommended by a particular friend as an innocent, well-diſpoſed girl. —— She frequently viſited Mrs. Winlove—ſhe had received numberleſs civilities from her huſband—there could be no harm in walking two or three turns with a married man—ſhe accepted his proferred arm, and they proceeded together.

I had been wiſhing for an agreeable companion in this walk, Annie, ſaid he.

Why

Why did you not bring Mrs. Winlove with you?

'Tis a natural queſtion, Annie; but a wife is not always the moſt agreeable companion. I am much better pleaſed with your company than I ſhould be with hers.

Annie had been brought up in the ſtricteſt principles of virtue; ſhe had likewiſe embibed ſome ſtrange, obſolete notions concerning honour, piety, integrity, and the like. She, therefore, thought it ſtrange that a man ſhould prefer the company of an indifferent perſon, to that of the woman to whom he had vowed eternal love and conſtancy.

How can you talk ſo inconſiſtently, Mr. Winlove? ſaid ſhe; ſurely my company cannot be preferable to that of the woman of your choice.

Do people never marry from any other motives than inclination?

I have heard, indeed, ſaid Annie, of marriages of intereſt, where avarice, not love, lighted the hymeneal torch; but I have too good an opinion of Mr. Winlove to think he could be biaſſed by ſo ſordid a motive.

How I am delighted to find that you entertain ſo high an opinion of me, my dear creature; and yet it pains me.

Oh,

Oh, why am I denied the power of beſtowing myſelf and fortune on a woman every way ſo amiable.

Annie was going to interrupt him, but he ſtopped her, and proceeded.—

Be not offended, my ſweet angel, you have no idea of the miſeries of my ſituation; drawn into a curſed connection with a woman who has neither beauty, merit, nor accompliſhments to render her a deſirable companion — a woman for whom I have not the leaſt tenderneſs, and whom I married from a miſtaken point of honour—unhappy wretch that I am, I muſt now daily ſee you, charming Annie, lovely, amiable, accompliſhed, yet obliged to earn a ſub-

 ſiſtence,

ſiſtence, when nature formed you to move in a ſphere more exalted, more ſuited to your gentle diſpoſition.—Theſe hands, dear girl, were not formed for labour—he took one hand and preſſed it tenderly to his lips.

Now, however Annie might be inclined to reprove Mr. Winlove in the beginning of this addreſs, the latter part of it was ſo prettily mixed with praiſes of herſelf, that ſhe could not well determine whether to be pleaſed or offended—ſhe therefore continued ſilent.

Annie was the daughter of a merchant; had been well educated; and being ſuppoſed to have a large fortune,

was

was early introduced into the ſchool of gallantry, and her ears invaded by the voice of adulation—ſhe was pretty—how could ſhe avoid knowing it? ſhe had heard an hundred different men ſwear it; her glaſs confirmed their oaths.—She was naturally ſenſible; but ſhe was vain, and a little inclined to coquetry.——Her father died inſolvent—ſhe was taken from a ſcene of grandeur, and apprenticed to a milliner.—She was good-natured; every body loved her—ſhe ſubmitted to her fate without repining, and endeavoured to render herſelf uſeful in her new occupation. — But, alas! poor Annie, ſhe loved the ſoft numbers of a Dryden or a Pope, much better than the ſtudy of the faſhions; and would prefer ſpend-

ing

ing an hour at her pen, before the formation of the moſt elegant ornament for the perſon.

It is not to be wondered at that ſhe was delighted by the voice of flattery, ſince ſhe had ſeldom, from her cradle, been accuſtomed to any other.

Mr. Winlove was artful; he eaſily diſcovered the method by which he might gain the good will of this ſimple girl; and imperceptibly changed the ſubject, from admiring the beauties of her perſon, to commend the graces of her mind. — He then inquired into the nature of her ſtudies; commended her taſte in the ſelection of authors; ventured gently to laugh at her ideas of religion;

religion; called them ſuperſtitions; ſaid ſhe was a novice in the ways of the world, and openly avowed a paſſion for her.

At firſt her looks plainly indicated her horror and amazement—She trembled — ſhrunk from him, and telling him ſhe was ſhocked to find the perſon ſhe had ſuppoſed her friend, was her bittereſt enemy, burſt into tears.

Had Annie acted with propriety ſhe would have inſtantly left him; but he attempted to palliate his offence — ſhe ſtaid to hear him.

How can you call me your enemy, dear Annie, ſaid he—though I doat on you almoſt

almoſt to madneſs, I would not injure you to obtain an empire. I will curb my paſſion; it ſhall be pure, exalted friendſhip that warms our boſoms; we may be friends, my ſweet girl; you cannot refuſe me that token of your eſteem.

Let your actions teach me to eſteem you, Mr. Winlove—I will be the friend of no man who pretends to laugh at all obligations moral and religious.

Mr. Winlove by degrees led her into a diſpute—Annie was not a match in argument with this inſidious friend; he was a ſophiſt; he preferred the laws of nature; called religion, prieſtcraft; brought innumerable proofs to convince her

her that her opinion was fallacious; and that she was entirely ignorant of the road to happiness, if she supposed it was to be found by strictly adhering to the musty rules prescribed by the aged and captious, who, unable any longer to enjoy the pleasures of youth, would deprive others of their share.

Take example, dear Annie, said he, from the excellent Eloise of Rousseau.

She had never read it.

He recommended it strongly for her perusal.

As she returned home, passing a library,

brary, Mr. Winlove purchaſed the pernicious novel, and gave it to Annie.

She took it home—ſhe read it—her judgement was perverted—ſhe believed in the reality of a platonic paſſion—ſhe thought ſhe had the virtue of an Eloiſe, and Mr. Winlove the honour of a St. Preux.

Churchill was the next author recommended.

She read—ſhe liſtened to the ſoft language of love, and imbibed pernicious poiſon from every page ſhe read, and every word ſhe heard.

Truſting to her own ſtrength and virtue,

virtue, ſhe made a private aſſignation—met him—confeſſed ſhe loved him—and was loſt.

But little now remains to be told.

A few months convinced her, that when honour is forfeited, love cannot exiſt.

Mr. Winlove forſook her.

Her reputation ſtained — without friends —without peace — deſpiſed and inſulted by her own ſex, pitied by the other, and renounced by her uncle, who had bound her apprentice, ſhe became the aſſociate of the abandoned and profligate; and reduced to chuſe

the

the dreadful alternative of death or infamy, became a partner in vices which once she would have shuddered but to think on.

THE

LOVE.

AND this man pleaded love as an incitement to the ruin of the poor, ſimple Annie.

What is love?

It is a queſtion which would be anſwered different ways, according to the age and ſituation of the perſon to whom it is addreſſed—Love! cries the lively girl, whoſe imagination is warmed by the peruſal of ſome ſentimental novel—Love is the cordial drop Heaven has thrown in, to ſweeten the bitter draught of life—without love we can only exiſt—ſweet ſoother of our cares! that can

ſtrew roſes on the coarſeſt bed, and make the moſt homely fare delicious.—Give me love and Strephon, an humble cottage ſhaded with woodbine; for love will render the retreat delightful!

Charmed with the enchanting ſcene her buſy fancy draws, ſhe imagines happineſs exiſts only in a cottage; and that, for the love of her dear Strephon, ſhe could eaſily, and without regret, forego all the indulgencies of her father's houſe; all the advantages of wealth, and ſolace herſelf with a brown cruſt and a pitcher of milk.—But then her Strephon will always be near her, ever whiſpering his love, and ſtudying to promote her felicity: fired with theſe romantic ideas, ſhe takes the firſt op-

portunity of quitting her home; and, without a moment's deliberation, throws herſelf upon the honour of a man, who, perhaps, had no further regard for her than the hope of ſharing her fortune might excite.

Aſk this ſame woman, ſome few months after, when poverty has viſited her dwelling, and unmaſked the real deſigns of her huſband, aſk her then what love is—her anſwer will be, it is a fooliſh, headſtrong paſſion, whoſe pleaſures exiſt merely in imagination; a blind hoodwinked deity, who leads on his votaries by promiſes of everlaſting felicity; and when too late for retreat, diſcovers his real aſpect, and plunges them into inevitable miſery—Yet this woman's ideas

of love were both erroneous—the reaſon of which was, ſhe had never realy felt the effects of that exalted paſſion.

Aſk the libertine what is love?

Innocence trembles at his anſwer; religion and virtue replies, it is ruin, infamy and ſhame.

The old, avaricious, captious wretch will tell you, there is no ſuch thing as love; that it never exiſted but in romances, plays, and novels.

Then pray, Mr. Inquiſitor, what is your opinion of love?

THE ANSWER.

REAL love was born of Beauty, nurſed by Innocence, and its life prolonged by good ſenſe, affability, and prudence—it conſiſts of a ſtrict union of ſoul and parity of ſentiment between two perſons of different ſexes—its conſtant attendants are honour, integrity, candour, humility, good nature, and chearfulneſs.

A paſſion of this kind elevates the ſoul, and inſpires it with fortitude to bear the various viciſſitudes of life without complaining—from ſuch a paſſion proceeds all the endearing ties of nature—Father, brother, huſband, wife,

mother, daughter; names, the very ſound of which will make every fibre of the heart vibrate with pleaſure.

What noble, praiſe-worthy actions have men performed when animated by the eſteem and love of a deſerving object; even women have forgot the weakneſs of their ſex, and ſuffered hardſhips, combated perils, and braved even the threats of war, for the ſake of a beloved huſband.—It opens the heart to all the gentle virtues which ornament ſociety—the heart ſuſceptible of love is never callous to the feelings of humanity; he never beholds a diſtreſſed object but he immediately wiſhes to relieve it, not that he feels ſo much for the perſon's ſuffering as for thoſe who

who may ſuffer with or for their diſtreſs, ſuch as a wife, huſband, or parent.—It is a paſſion which, when inſpired by virtue, and guided by religion and reaſon, dignifies mankind—a paſſion which ornaments the higheſt ſtation, and adds new luſtre even to the Britiſh diadem.

Illuſtrious pair! whoſe every action tends to point the way to real happineſs; long, long may you reign the pride and bleſſing of your people—May your bright example ſpread throughout the kingdom, till Hymen, led by Love and Honour, ſhall reign triumphant o'er the Britiſh nation.

It is very extraordinary, but I never

can finiſh with the ſubject I begin upon — I began a definition of Love, and I ramble immediately to the King and Queen; and how was it poſſible I could do otherwiſe when love and harmony was the theme.

My fair country-women, you whoſe hearts are formed by nature open to every gentle, generous ſentiment, beware of Love—there are many deceivers who aſſume his appearance, and ſteal unſuſpected into the heart; but of all the various ſhapes it aſſumes, none is ſo much to be dreaded as the ſpecious maſk of friendſhip. — There has been more women loſt through platonic love than any other; and the reaſon is, they are thrown entirely off their guard,

and

and have not the leaſt doubt of the ſtrength of their own virtue, or their lover's honour, till both are forfeited paſt redemption.

But all this is digreſſing from Annie's ſtory.

THE SEQUEL.

WHEN ſhe had finiſhed her relation I took her into a hackney coach, and conveyed her home—candidly told my dear Emma the circumſtance of our meeting, and aſked her advice in what manner to diſpoſe of the poor girl.

We tried her penitence; found it ſincere; and willing to encourage her in virtue, recommended her to the ſervice of a lady whoſe example confirmed thoſe ſentiments which were newly returning to be the inmates of Annie's boſom.

I have

I have frequently ſeen her ſince, and experience a thouſand times more ſatisfaction in the reflection that I have ſnatched her from infamy, than the man of pleaſure can feel who raiſes the object of his guilty purſuit from the loweſt ſtation, to affluence and grandeur.

That is but a bad compariſon neither; the two actions cannot come in competition with each other, ſince the firſt elevates human nature, the latter debaſes it.

THE JOURNEY.

I HAVE often been ſurpriſed to find that perſons who are poſſeſſed of ellegant villas, and are at liberty to diſpoſe of their time as they think proper, ſhould prefer ſpending it in London. For my own part I ſhould hardly paſs one month of the twelve in that ſeat of commerce and buſtle, were it not for unavoidable obligations.

I find the pureſt pleaſures ariſe from a walk in a pleaſant meadow, hedged round with hawthorn, in a ſweet May morning, when the lark attunes her early ſong, and chants forth the praiſes

of

of her Creator; to ſee bright Phœbus leave his watery bed and kiſs away Aurora's pearly tears which hang upon the opening flowers.

Drive on, ſaid I to the poſtillion, I long to be at my journey's end, and I muſt poſitively dine at Friendly Hall to day.

Pray, your Honour, give me ſome halfpence, ſaid a boy that ran out of a cottage as the carriage paſſed.

He was an arch-looking boy, with curly hair, very decently dreſſed, and ran along by the ſide of the carriage with ſurpriſing agility. — I threw him out ſome halfpence; and looking out

of

of the window to obſerve him pick them up, I ſaw a young man who had greatly the appearance of a gentleman, eagerly take the money from the child, and go into the cottage.

I had ſcarcely mentioned the circumſtance to my Emma, before the poſtillion driving careleſſly over a heap of ſtones, one of the wheels gave way, and down came the coach.

At another time I ſhould undoubtedly have ſworn at the poſtillion, and thrown myſelf into a violent paſſion from which I might not have recovered the whole day.—At preſent, as there was no harm done, the accident only coincided with my wiſhes, which led me towards the cottage;

cottage; so, helping my Emma out, and taking Harriot in one hand and Lucy in the other, we walked into the humble habitation.

THE

THE COTTAGERS.

THE young man was ſeated by a woman whoſe face had never been remarkable for beauty, but was irreſiſtably charming, overſhadowed by melancholy, and adorned by ſenſibility. — Her fine auburn hair ſhe had endeavoured to confine under a ſmall lawn cap, but it had broke from its bandage, and played in wanton ringlets round her face.

A child about three months old was at her breaſt, and the boy to whom I had given the halfpence, was making boats with bits of wood, and ſwimming them

them in a pail of water that ſtood in a corner of the room.

As we entered, the young man glanced his eyes upon his cloaths; his cheeks aſſumed a ſanguine hue.—They certainly were thread bare; but what of that? they had once been new, and from what remained we could ſee they had once been elegant; perhaps it was that very circumſtance which diſtreſſed him.

Whatever circumſtances a perſon is in, you may always diſcover by their behaviour whether they have been inured to their ſituations from childhood—A perſon who has never known any thing but poverty, ſhews no other

mark of chagrin at the entrance of a ſtranger than what proceeds from an awkwardneſs of manner which they ever betray when in the company of their ſuperiors—and raiſe that perſon to the moſt exalted ſtation, and you will ſtill perceive the ſame diſguſting awkwardneſs and ruſticity. — So, place a man of education in ever ſo obſcure a ſituation, you will always diſcover the manners of the gentleman, though obſcured by the garb of the beggar.

I, therefore, no ſooner beheld the young man than I diſcovered that he had not always worn a thread-bare coat, or lived from his childhood in a cottage.

The EMBARRASSMENT.

I AM hungry, mama, ſaid Harriet.

Could you procure us a little bread and milk, ſaid I to the young woman.

We have none in the houſe, Sir, ſhe replied, viſibly embarraſſed; and it is above two miles to another cottage.

The young man turned pale as aſhes.

Give me my money, mother, ſaid the boy, and I will go and buy ſome.

She heſitated, and the boy proceeded.

I think it is time we had ſome breakfaſt—I am ſure I am hungry, and ſo are you—I heard you ſay ſo, or I ſhould not have begged of the gentlefolks.

He will diſcover our poverty, ſaid the father, forcing a ſmile. —— The mother turned from us and wept.

Pardon me, Madam, ſaid Emma, if I aſk the cauſe of your tears—it is not curioſity, but a wiſh to ſerve you occaſions the queſtion.

Pride and poverty, replied the young man, ſtruggling to ſuppreſs his emotions.

Will this relieve you, ſaid I, offering him a few guineas.—

Though

Though I am almoſt ſtarving, ſaid he, I feel more anguiſh than ſatisfaction at the offer; nor would I accept it but for my wife and children.

It is extraordinary that there is ſuch an innate pride implanted in the mind of ſome men that they are aſhamed of poverty, though it was entailed upon them by unavoidable misfortunes; and I am certain that people of this caſt, in receiving favours, though perhaps thoſe favours raiſe them from a ſtate of penury to plenty, feel a larger ſhare of pain than pleaſure—the noble mind is always pained when labouring under the weight of obligations.

Now, ſhame upon the world for oc-

caſioning this—were it not that there is greater reſpect paid to the gilded equipage, glaring liveries, and embroidered cloaths, than to the poor atom of clay that is attended by all this pomp, a man would never bluſh at poverty when it was attended by honour and virtue.

I do not mean hereditary honour, I mean a nobleneſs of ſoul, an elevation of ſentiment, an integrity of heart, that would rather bear the laugh of the world for keeping within the ſtrict rules of œconomy than ſuffer a tradeſman's bill to go unpaid, or a fellow-creature to want ſuſtenance.

A man of real honour will not al-

ways draw his ſword at every trivial offence; but he ever ſtands forth the undaunted champion of innocence and virtue—he alſo holds his friend's wife or daughter as ſacred, regards them with eſteem, and treats them with reſpect.

The modern man of honour is quite a different creature; he muſt have his pleaſures whether he can afford to pay for them or not; he will ſteal his friend's fortune at the gaming table; debauch his wife, or enſnare his daughter, and then run him through the body by way of reparation.

And, what is hereditary honour?—A word of pompous ſound—a toy—a

plaything — a pretty bauble for children of twenty, thirty, aye, up to an hundred years of age.

I have ſeen thoſe great babies as pleaſed with enumerating the titles of their anceſtors, as an infant has been with a new rattle or a jack in the box.

Sir, my forefathers were Earls, or Dukes, or Princes — Sir, I have noble blood in my veins, which has flowed uncontaminated through twenty generations.

Yes, Sir, but your anceſtors were cruel, or unjuſt, or ambitious, or avaricious, proud, or revengeful. — But they were Earls, or Dukes, or Princes. —

That

That is the convincing argument; and my Lord ſits down perfectly contented with the reflection that he is right honourable by birth, and never gives himſelf the trouble to perform one honourable action during the whole courſe of his life.

And, pray what has this to do with the cottagers?

Faith I don't know that it has the leaſt connection with them; but I never can preſcribe rules for my pen, any more than I can confine my thoughts to one ſingle object.—To write ſtraight forward, is like an hackney horſe that, ſetting out from the firſt ſtage, continues in the beaten track till he arrives

at

at the end of his journey—for my part I hate ſuch inſipid travelling; mine is a journey of pleaſure, and I will turn out of the road as often as I pleaſe to take a view of any thing amuſing or entertaining.

THE

THE STEWARD.

THE young man went out and procured ſome refreſhment, of which we partook, and, after the repaſt was finiſhed, the wife prepared to give us her own and huſband's hiſtory——

She laid her infant to ſleep, ſet her apartment in proper order; and, having ſet a mug of cyder (which her huſband had brought in) upon the table, ſat down to gratify the curioſity ſhe had ſo ſtrongly excited—

At that inſtant a fat old man rode up to the door, diſmounted, faſtened his horſe to a tree, and entered.

I never

I never caſt my eye upon a ſtranger but I immediately form ſome idea of his or her diſpoſitions by the turn of their eyes and caſt of their features; and though my ſkill in phyſiognomy is not infallible, I ſeldom find myſelf deceived in my opinion.

The old man had a ſort of haughtineſs in his carriage, which ſeemed the reſult of mean pride and ſelf ſufficiency; his perſon was coarſe, his manner rude, his language almoſt inſulting.

I am ſurpriſed, ſaid he, to the young man, that you have not brought me your laſt half-year's rent — I have repeatedly ſent, and will no longer be put off by your trifling excuſes—I am now come

come for the money, and will not depart without it.

Sir, ſaid the young man, we have it not; and to add to our misfortunes, two days ſince our cattle was ſeized for a ſmall ſum which we owed in the neighbourhood.—

Money I want, and money I will have, ſaid the man—a large ſum is to be made up this week, and I will not wait any longer—if you do not ſend me the rent within two days, I will turn you out of the cottage, firſt ſeizing what ſtock you have.

Confound this money, ſaid I; it is the

the occaſion of more ill will and diſſention than any thing elſe in the world.—

Why, pray, young man, ſaid he, what would *you* do without money?

I was dreſſed very plainly — ſo was Emma and the children — he had not ſeen the carriage that was repairing; or if he had, he could never have ſuppoſed it was mine.

He addreſſed me, therefore by this familiar epithet, on account of his ſuppoſed ſuperiority; and as he pronounced the words *young man*, he aſſumed ſuch an air of ſelf ſufficiency, and ſat himſelf back in the chair with ſuch an inſulting

aſſurance,

aſſurance, that I had hardly patience to anſwer him calmly.

If there was no money in the world, ſaid I, there would be no extortion: and, I fancy then, you, my good friend, would find but little employment.

One of my ſervants then informed me that the carriage was ready—I enquired of my young hoſt if this was his landlord, and was informed he was only ſteward to Lord M——: I became anſwerable for the rent, and determined, on my return to town, to pay a viſit to his Lordſhip, and inform him of the neceſſitous ſituation of his tenants.

THE AUTHOR.

ONE evening as I was rambling out, I obſerved a man ſitting on the trunk of an old tree, with a paper and pencil in his hand; at firſt I ſuppoſed him to be drawing, but, on a nearer approach, I found he was writing.

Pray, Sir, ſaid I, advancing, and paying him the compliments of the evening, what may be the ſubject which ſo agreeably engages your attention? I preſume you are ſacrificing at the ſhrine of the Muſes—I am, Sir, ſaid he, riſing and putting the paper in his pocket—I have been writing all this ſummer, and in the winter I hope to have my works in

print—It is a novel, Sir, entirely calculated to amuſe—

In how many volumes?

Two.

And are you ſure of ſelling them?

I am engaged, Sir, to write for a perſon who ſcarcely ever publiſhes any thing but novels.

What may be the plot or foundation of your novel?

It is called *Annabella*; or *Suffering Innocence*—my heroine is beautiful, accompliſhed, and rich; an only child,

and ſurrounded by admirers—ſhe contracts an attachment for a man, her inferior in point of birth and fortune; but honourable, handſome, &c.—She has a female friend to whom ſhe relates all that paſſes in her breaſt—her hopes, fears, meetings, partings, &c.—She is treated hardly by her friends—combats innumerable difficulties in the ſentimental way, but at laſt overcomes them all, and is made the bride of the man of her heart.

Pſhaw, ſaid I, that is ſtale; there are at this preſent day above two thouſand novels in exiſtance which begin and end exactly in the ſame way—the novel writers have now taken another road; and, if you will give me leave, I will

juſt give you a few hints which may, perhaps, be of ſome ſervice to you in writing a novel in future.

SKETCH OF A MODERN NOVEL.

IN the firſt place, your heroine muſt fall violently in love with an all-accompliſhed youth at a very early age—keep her paſſion concealed from her parents or guardians; but bind herſelf in her own mind to wed no other than this dear, firſt conqueror of her heart—ill-natured, proud, ambitious fathers are very neceſſary to be introduced—kind, affectionate, amiable mothers. The ſuperlative beauty and accompliſhments of your heroine, or perhaps the ſplendor of her fortune, muſt attract the attention of a man diametrically oppoſite in perſon and diſpoſition to her firſt lover—the father muſt threaten—the mother en-

treat—and the lover be very urgent for the completion of his felicity—remember to mix a ſufficient quantity of ſighs, tears, ſwooning, hyſterics, and all the moving expreſſions of heart-rending woe—her filial duty muſt triumph over inclination; and ſhe muſt be led like a victim to the altar—

So much for the firſt part.

The ſecond volume diſplays her angelic, her exemplary conduct in the character of a wife—the huſband muſt be jealous, brutal, fond of gaming, keep a miſtreſs, laviſh all his fortune on ſharpers and lewd women—the wife pious, gentle, obedient and reſigned—

Be ſure you contrive a duel; and, if convenient, a ſuicide might not be amiſs—lead your heroine thro' wonderful trials—let her have the fortitude of an anchorite; the patience of an angel—but in the end, ſend her firſt huſband to the other world, and unite her to the firſt poſſeſſor of her heart—join a few other incidents; ſuch as the hiſtory of her boſom friend, and a confidante—Manage your plot in ſuch a manner as to have ſome ſurpriſing diſcovery made—wind up with two or three marriages; and the ſuperlative felicity of all the *dramatis perſonæ*.

There, Sir, ſaid I, there you have the ſubſtance of a narrative which might be ſpun out to two or three volumes—there

there has been many novels introduced to the public built on as ſlender a foundation as that—The Modern Fine Gentleman, Deſerted Bride, Clara and—

THE INTERRUPTION.

I HAVE often been ſurpriſed, ſaid the author, taking the ſketch (for I had wrote it down) and giving me a bow of thanks—It has often ſurpriſed me, ſaid he, to find that all the diſtreſſes of a novel proceeds from a paſſion which is in general ſuppoſed to contribute to our chief happineſs—All writers of that ſort of production, from the time of romance and enchanted tales to the preſent tribe of ſcribblers, could find no other ſubject to employ their pens but love—I wonder that the novel readers are not tired of reading one ſtory ſo many times, with only the variation of its being told different ways.

When

When I first commenced Author, continued he, I wrote on religion and philosophy; but I found in the first I could gain no reputation unless I wrote in the entuhsiastic stile of a Methodist; and the latter was too abstruse a study for the young and gay, required too much time for the old, and was totally improper for the ignorant and illiterate.—My books would not sell—I had frequently applied to a person eminent for his numerous publications. He told me if I wished to get a living I must write to amuse rather than instruct the world; and that if I would write him a good novel in two volumes, he would give me ten guineas for it.

He thought, no doubt, ten guineas

was

a very large ſum to be put into the hands of a poor author: to deal candidly, I ſhould have been very glad at that time of a fifth part of the ſum—but to proceed—I was not at all converſant in that ſort of reading; but finding it abſolutely neceſſary, I borrowed ſome of the beſt eſteemed modern novels from a library and began to peruſe them with great attention, but there was a ſameneſs in the generality of them that diſguſted, and a looſeneſs in the language of others that ſhocked me.

It is indeed ſhocking, ſaid I, to ſee ſo many reams of paper expended in uſhering to the world pernicious pages, which tend to vitiate the taſte and corrupt the heart. When the heroine of a

novel

novel is repreſented as flying in the face of filial duty, eloping, running into the very lap of danger, braving the authority of her parents, and forgetting the decorum and delicacy which ought to be the characteriſtic of the female ſex, and yet, in the end meets with every bleſſing, every comfort, ſhe can wiſh; is it not enough to ruin the weak head and unwary heart, by leading them to think true felicity is to be found by following the bent of their own inclinations, though never ſo wayward and oppoſite to the advice of their friends or the dictates of reaſon?

Nor can I think that the more modern productions contain a better moral, ſince the whole merit of the filial obedience

dience is cancelled by the retaining an affection for one man after they have vowed eternal fidelity to another.

I would wiſh the authors of thoſe works to reflect, that it is the inclinations of the heart that renders us guilty as much as the actual commiſſion of a crime; and a woman who ſtrays from her huſband only in wiſhes and thoughts, is in reality as culpable as ſhe who actually wounds his honour.

I have very nice notions of conjugal fidelity and filial duty, and earneſtly wiſh that no writings might ever be made public which tend to injure either: they are the foundation on which we may always raiſe the temple of happineſs;

pineſs; they are a crown of glory for the head, a cordial and comforter even to the ſorrow-wounded heart.

Theſe virtues are the brighteſt ornaments the female ſex can wear, they make the plaineſt woman lovely; and, when diſplayed in an eminent degree, elevate the human ſoul, and make it little inferior to angels.

The FAIR MANIAC.

I was proceeding in this manner, when a lovely young creature darted out of a little cottage, as we were paſſing, and ſeizing me by the arm, eagerly deſired I would convey her back to her friends.

They ſay I am mad, ſaid ſhe: but I am not, I have my reaſon as well as they have; I know I am miſerable, and have been ſo ever ſince they took my brother from me.—Oh! cruel to tear him from my arms, to break my very heart ſtrings, and ſend him away, never, never to return—he went on the treacherous ocean—Yes, yes, the ſea, the ſky, all,

all, all combined with my inhuman guardian to take him from me—hark! hark! do you not hear the wind?—See the blue lightning—the raging waves—the thunder—I hear it—I ſee the veſſel beat the foaming ſea—I ſee my brother—ſee him wave his hand—I cannot come—I cannot ſave thee—the veſſel parts—ſhe ſinks—he's gone, he's gone—Oh! mercileſs.—

Alas! my drooping lily, ſaid I, you ſee nothing; there is no ſea near you; this is merely the effect of fancy; your brother, no doubt, is ſafe, and will one day return to make you happy.

Oh no! ſaid ſhe, croſſing her hands upon her boſom, and ſitting down upon the

the ground.—Oh no! he will never return to me; he will never more ſooth and chear his unhappy ſiſter—but here will I ſit on this lone bank and mourn the heavy hour in which he left me—I'll build a tomb of ſea ſhells, weeds, and corals—I'll plant around it pale primroſes and ſickly daffodils, and every day I'll waſh it with my tears, and count the hours, and chide dull lagging Time, till his ſharp ſicthe ſhall cut life's fine-drawn thread, and I may lay me down and ſleep with my dear Horace—

Horace! ſaid I, looking more intently at her—It was poor Julietta—then Vellum was a villian.

At

At the name of Vellum ſhe ſtarted from the ground, appeared terrified, looked wildly round her, and uttering a faint exclamation, ran haſtily into the cottage.

I bade the author a good night and followed her—but an old woman, who I found was her only attendant, could give me no information concerning her, only that ſhe had loſt her ſenſes ever ſince the death of her brother, who was ſhipwrecked as he was going abroad to finiſh his education, and that ſhe had been ſent into the country in hopes the air would be of ſervice to her.

I found my heart ſo deeply engaged by the miſerable ſituation of this lovely

orphan, that it was with difficulty I reſtrained my tears when I preſſed her cold hand and bade her good night.

THE

THE MENDICANT.

THOUGH it was near three years ſince I had been a witneſs to the ſorrow of Julietta, on the death of her father, yet the ſcene ſtill remained freſh in my memory—I remembered the doubts I then entertained of Vellum's integrity, and was determined immediately to return to town and ſearch into the myſtery of Horace's death, and the ſhocking privation of Julietta's ſenſes.

When I have once formed a reſolution, I am not long in putting it in execution.

The morning after my arrival in

town, I determined to pay Mr. Vellum an inviſible viſit.

As I was proceeding through a very public ſtreet, I ſaw a ſervant, in livery, feeding a fine dog with bits of roaſt meat, which appeared perfectly freſh and good.—A poor woman, whoſe tattered garb ſpoke extremity of poverty, whoſe emaciated frame ſeemed tottering on the verge of eternity, and whoſe head was ſprinkled over with hoary froſt, approached the man, and in the humbleſt manner intreated him to let her pick up a little of the victuals which he had thrown to the animal—only one bit, Sir, ſaid ſhe, to ſave me from ſtarving—The ſervant was ſilent—ſhe took

it for conſent, and bent forward to pick up what the dog ſeemed to refuſe.

The ſervant, who, unmoved, had heard her requeſt, no ſooner ſaw her attempt to gather up the broken ſcraps, than he ſtepped eagerly to her, ſnatched them from her, and with ſacrilegious hand ſtruck the wretched mortal, whoſe ſex, age, and poverty, ſhould have kept her ſacred from inſult.

Good Heavens! ſaid I, that a man ſhould ſo far forget himſelf.—What! muſt the brute creation enjoy eaſe and plenty, while an unhappy human being wanders through the ſtreets periſhing with hunger!—and what muſt this poor woman ſuffer at ſeeing herſelf denied

the fragments that are rejected by a brute? for the dog had abſolutely left a large part of the food that had been given him.

Who does that dog belong to? ſaid I to the ſervant.

Lord M——, ſaid he.

Lord M——, ſaid I, at that inſtant recollecting the unhappy cottagers—then why not pay Lord M—— a viſit now, as well as at any other time; it will only defer my intended inquiry at Mr. Vellum's a few hours longer.

It was no ſooner thought on than determined; and having inquired of the ſervant

ſervant in which houſe his Lordſhip reſi-
ded, I put on my ring, aſcended the
ſteps, and patiently waited the opening
of the door.

THE PEOPLE OF FASHION.

I CHOSE to make this viſit inviſible that I might be the better able to judge of the ſentiments and diſpoſition of his Lordſhip.

Having got admittance into the houſe unperceived, I followed a ſervant who was going up ſtairs with the breakfaſt apparatus, though it was then one o'clock.

On entering a room, I ſaw a woman in an elegant *diſhabille*, lolling on a ſopha, and turning over an enormous heap of complimentary cards—She was between forty and fifty—was finely formed,

med, and had once been handſome, if one might judge from a regular ſet of features; but at preſent her ſkin was ſhrivelled and yellow, her eyes ſunk and languid.

Thomas, ſaid ſhe to the ſervant, is my Lord ſtiring?

Yes, my Lady.

Go with my compliments, and I ſhould be glad of his company to breakfaſt.

In a few moments my Lord entered, threw himſelf into an eaſy chair, yawned, and drawled out the compliments of the morning.

Where

Where were you, my Lord, laſt night? I was quite ſurpriſed at not ſeeing you at Lady Blackace's—all the world was there.

It is quite *a bore*, my Lady, to ſee a man and his wife in the ſame place.

Very true, my Lord; but had your Lordſhip appeared I ſhould certainly have been ſo polite as to have made my exit.—*A propos*, my Lord—I wonder what has become of that fond fool, Charles Howard, and how he and Iſabella like matrimony with the ſour ſauce of poverty——Good God! continued ſhe, I wonder how any body can think of ſwallowing that bitter pill without

without having it ſufficiently gilded over.

A ſervant entered, and announced Mr. Howard.

Mr. Howard! cried my Lady, ſtaring up with aſtoniſhment, ſurely you miſtake; my brother has been dead above theſe ſeven years; and Charles cannot think of coming.

The gentleman certainly ſent up the name of Howard, ſaid the ſervant.

He was bid to ſhew him up.

THE FATHER.

AN elegant, elderly gentleman ſoon entered the room, dreſſed in the military habit—he paid his reſpects politely to my Lord—advanced to the Lady with a look of tenderneſs, and embraced her.

You are, no doubt, ſurpriſed to ſee me, ſiſter, ſaid he, after having ſuppoſed me dead ſo many years; but your ſurpriſe will be converted into joy when I inform you during the laſt ſeven years of my abſence I have accumulated a large fortune, and am now come to reclaim my ſon, and return the kindneſs and generoſity with which you ſtepped forward,

and

and offered him your favour and protection during the time when my duty forced me to be abſent from my native country—You, my dear Lord and Lady M——, took my poor boy when he had no inheritance but poverty.

During the time the old gentleman was delivering theſe words Lady M—'s countenance underwent ſeveral changes, and at laſt ſettled in a deadly pale—the fond father inſtantly ſaw the change, and aſked in a voice ſcarcely audible, whether his child was dead?

No, Captain Howard, ſaid my Lord, he is not dead but he has behaved ſo ill of late, that he has entirely forfeited my favour; he has voluntarily abſented himſelf

himſelf from my houſe; and, to confeſs the truth, I have not ſeen him theſe ſix years, nor do I know where he is.

And what has he done? aſked the diſtracted father.

He has behaved like a poor, mean-ſpirited wretch, ſaid my Lady—he has degraded the family by marrying a low, vulgar creature, in direct oppoſition to the advice, nay, abſolute commands, of my Lord and myſelf.

Upon my honour, Mr. Howard, ſaid my Lord, I had contracted ſuch an eſteem for the lad, that I had poſitively determined to adopt him; but on his abſolutely perſiſting in his deſign of marrying

marrying the low creature my Lady mentions, I forbid him my houſe :— I had no intention to adopt a beggar's brat.

The converſation was now interrupted by a ſervant, who informed my Lady there was company in the drawing room —ſhe begged leave of her brother to go and receive them; and my Lord, having rung for his valet, retired to adjuſt his dreſs.

THE ECLAIRCISSEMENT.

CAPTAIN Howard had been abruptly informed that his ſon had forfeited his uncle's favour; had been informed of it in a manner inconſiderate and unfeeling, and then left to himſelf to reflect at leiſure on his misfortune.

He ſat with one hand reſting on the breakfaſt table, and the other in his boſom, his brow contracted, and his eyes fixed on the floor — there was ſuch a dignity in his perſon, and yet ſuch an apparent concern upon his countenance, that my affections were drawn toward him by an irreſiſtible impulſe — I longed

to

to call him brother and friend—my heart was wrung with ſenſibility.

And what avails it, ſaid I, that this man has accumulated a large fortune?—of what benefit is wealth to him?—he had looked upon his ſon as his greateſt treaſure—for theſe many years has his delighted imagination drawn a moſt perfect picture of felicity in the idea of beholding this beloved ſon, and ſeeing him enjoying the favour of his uncle, and perhaps wedded to ſome amiable woman, who, to the gifts of birth and fortune, added the gifts of nature, whoſe beauty created love, and her virtue eſteem.

Behold him now in one moment be-

reaved of this darling hope, his heart aching with paternal love and fear—oh! would children but reflect how greatly the happineſs of a parent depends on their well doing; could they have the leaſt idea of the mighty pangs which tear the parental boſom when they ſtray from their duty, they would ſurely avoid every action which might tend to diſturb the peace or wound the minds of their parents; for ſure I am, that not the ſharpeſt torture enthuſiaſtic zeal could invent, can equal the torments that rend the heart of a fondly-doating, diſappointed parent.

My meditations were interrupted by a decent, elderly woman, who opened the door, and, advancing to Captain

Howard, welcomed him cordially to England.

My good Mrs. Watſon, ſaid he, taking her by her hand, can you tell me where Charles is, and to whom he has united himſelf ſo contrary to the deſire of his uncle and aunt?

It was for that purpoſe, ſaid Mrs. Watſon, that I took the liberty of coming into the room to ſpeak to you—but this room, Sir, is not a proper place to converſe in; I muſt beg you to come into my apartment, and I will then inform you of ſome circumſtances which will fill you with aſtoniſhment.

I felt a curioſity which I could not

withſtand, and, anxious for the fate of Charles, I followed Captain Howard and Mrs. Watſon into another apartment. Mrs. Watſon I found was Lady M—'s Houſekeeper, and had formerly lived in that capacity with her Ladyſhip's Mother—When Captain Howard was ſeated, ſhe related the following circumſtances:

You know, Sir, ſaid ſhe, juſt before you left England, my Lady, at my Lord's requeſt, had taken Miſs Iſabella Beauchamp to be her companion—you had not been gone many years before Mr. Beauchamp died inſolvent, and the poor young Lady had no dependance but on my Lord, who was a diſtant relation of her father's. From the time

of

of Mr. Beauchamp's death, Lady M— altered in her behaviour to Miſs Bella; treated her often with diſreſpect; and in general, with cold contempt—My Lord, on the contrary, behaved with the greateſt politeneſs, aſſiduity, and attention; made her elegant preſents, inſiſted on her joining all parties, public or private, in which Lady M— was included——young Mr. Howard ſhewed the attention of a brother; and, I muſt own, this conduct raiſed both the gentlemen highly in my opinion. It was with great concern that I noticed a ſettled melancholy on Miſs Bella's countenance, and often would ſhe retire from a crouded aſſembly to her own apartment and give a looſe to her tears—ſhe had always conducted herſelf in ſuch

a manner as to gain the love of all the domeſtics, and ſhe had favoured me with many ſingular marks of friendſhip—I therefore took the liberty one day to inquire into the cauſe of her melancholy; when burſting into a flood of grief, ſhe cried oh! Mrs. Watſon, what will become of me? Lord M— purſues me with a criminal paſſion—I cannot ſtay in this family to be ſubject to his inſults; and if I leave it, how ſhall I guard myſelf from the ſneers and inſults of the unfeeling part of mankind, who know not how to pity poverty? or how ſhall I provide for the neceſſaries of life? I endeavoured all in my power to conſole her, and told her I would certainly look out for ſome reputable family where ſhe might be boarded on moderate

moderate terms, and that I would adviſe her to ſell a few of her jewels to provide for the preſent, and truſt in Providence that her future life may be more fortunate—ſhe gave me a pair of diamond earings, which were her mother's, to diſpoſe of; but as I was returning to my own apartment I met Mr. Howard, and knowing he was always plentifully ſupplied with money by his aunt, I determined to make him acquainted with Miſs Bella's ſituation, and engage him to aſſiſt her—but judge my ſurpriſe, when I had informed him of my Lord's deſigns, to hear him fly into a moſt violent rage, and ſwear ſhe ſhould not ſtay another hour in the houſe, called her his wife, his adored Bella, and was haſtening to her apartment, when he was ſtopped by his

aunt, who had overheard our converſation, and peremptorily demanded whether he had been ſo mean ſpirited as to marry Miſs Beauchamp ?—he anſwered with warmth, he was not married to her; but ſince there was no other way to ſhield her from the contempt of pride and the inſults of libertiniſm, he would marry her the next morning.

Lady M— was greatly irritated, and ſent a meſſage to Miſs Beauchamp, commanding her to quit her houſe inſtantly—Charles followed the poor diſtreſſed girl; and before my Lord returned, who was then in the Country, prevailed on her to give him a lawful right to protect her.

However ill Miſs Beauchamp had been treated, Mr. Howard thought it was his duty to viſit his uncle, and ſue for his pardon, for the precipitate ſtep he had taken.

They made their appearance the morning after my Lord came to town—it is unneceſſary, and would only be ſhocking your feelings, to give you an account of the reception they met with; ſuffice it to ſay, they were ſpurned by the haughty pair, and turned with indignity out of the houſe. Lord M— ſwearing by all that was holy he would not give them a ſingle farthing to keep them from ſtarving—they left the houſe, and I never heard where they were till laſt ſummer, when I accidentally found them

them in a mean cottage, which they rented of Lord M—s Steward—they went by an aſſumed name, and Mrs. Howard having bred very faſt, and being very weakly, they were reduced to the moſt abject ſtate of penury.

Then theſe are my poor cottagers, ſaid I.

—Mr. Howard, when he had heard the concluſion of her relation, aroſe from his ſeat and looking at once joy and indignation, ſwore he would never reſt till he had found his dear injured Charles.

I will find him, ſaid he; and his lovely Iſabella ſhall be rewarded for all her love

love and patient ſufferings—he gave the houſekeeper ſomething by way of gratuity, and immediately departed—when I, having no farther buſineſs there, followed his example.

NATURAL

NATURAL REFLECTION.

IT has often ſurpriſed me to find that people who have, with unbounded generoſity, educated, cloathed, and foſtered an infant in childhood, indulging it to an extravagant degree, never ſuffering it to be contradicted, but bringing it up in eaſe and luxury, ſhall, when that infant arrives at years of maturity, when it has attained ſenſe and reaſon ſufficient to enable it to judge what will moſt conduce to its own happineſs, for the moſt trifling miſdemeanor, nay, for only daring to think contrary to its benefactors, or preſuming to chooſe a companion for itſelf, ſpurn from them, with indignity, the object they

they once cheriſhed, and drive it out defenceleſs to brave thoſe ſtorms of adverſity which the education they have beſtowed on it renders it totally unable to combat with—it has often puzzled me to determine whether ſuch people have ever been actuated by true generoſity. Pure philanthropy will lead us rather to ſtudy the happineſs of an human being, when it is capable of receiving real ſatisfaction from our kindneſs. So far from evincing our affection to children by unlimited indulgencies, we are acting with cruelty toward them, ſince we are laying up a fund of diſcontent and uneaſineſs for hereafter. How hard is it for thoſe darlings of families, whoſe every deſire has been complied with, who never wiſhed for a toy or

bauble

bauble but it was procured, tho' at the moſt exorbitant price, who was always fed with the greateſt dainties, to find, when arrived at maturity, that they are journeying thro' a world where they will unavoidably meet with diſappointments, vexation and trouble—for my part, I would never indulge my children in a wiſh which I thought might tend hereafter to render them unhappy; I would teach them to confine their deſires within the bounds of moderation, not by moroſely oppoſing all their little fancies, but by inſenſibly drawing off their attention to any other objects.

As they advanced in years, I would, by example, teach them that forbearance and ſelf denial, which precept alone will

will ever fail to effect. If they have affluence, let them enjoy every reaſonable wiſh of their hearts; and no one need inquire what is to be done with the overplus.

Oh! ye ſons and daughters of proſperity, look around you; ſee, in yon little manſion lies a mother; a few hours ſince made her the parent of her ſeventh child; ſhe is in a ſituation, of all others the moſt deſerving pity; ſhe has ſcarcely the means to ſupport life; ſhe is on a bed of pain and weakneſs; pain, my lovely countrywomen, from which none of you are exempt, and which, no doubt, you think almoſt inſufferable, tho' you are ſurrounded with all the comforts and bleſſings of life—that poor

poor woman has no comfort—her huſband is at ſea, labouring, watching, toiling for a ſmall pittance, which he hopes to bring home to his wife and children—ſhe has anguiſh of mind added to the ſickneſs of her frame—have you no trifle to ſpare, madam, which might, in ſome meaſure, alleviate that poor creature's ſufferings? Two or three of thoſe guineas will never be miſſed by you, and they will be a treaſure to her. You cannot ſpare them—you had rather lay them out in an hobby horſe for maſter, or a wax baby for miſs—if the dear creatures are diſappointed, they will fret and ſpoil their pretty faces with crying; and what mother can refuſe her little darlings any thing they aſk for?

Oh!

Oh! ſhame on thee, woman; thou haſt not one ſpark of genuine maternal tenderneſs in thy compoſition or thou wouldeſt prefer eaſing the pangs of a wretched mother whoſe heart is peirced by the cries of her children wanting bread, rather than by gratifying the caprice of thy own children—lead them to ſet no farther value on the wealth which providence has entruſted to their care, than as it may ſerve to purchaſe pleaſure, diſſipation, and folly.

Your wealth was certainly given you to purchaſe pleaſure, but pleaſures far, very far different from thoſe you are ſo eager in the purſuit of—Go wipe the tear from the eye of affliction; cloath the poor naked wretch who,

nightly unhouſed in ſome ſad lonely place, braves ſtorms and tempeſts, heats and pinching cold—go releaſe the unfortunate tradeſman, who through the inattention, folly, or villany of others, has loſt his property, and now ſighs out his long, long hours in a priſon—Go ſeek the wretched mortals, who, by dire misfortune reduced, oppreſſed by the iron hand of affliction, ſit ſtarving in obſcurity, and, rather than aſk the cruel world for aſſiſtance, or blazon forth their heart-felt ſorrows, would ſink to the ſilent grave, victims to famine in the land of plenty.

I know, Madam, you will ſay I am very dull, that I have given you the vapours, that theſe are phantoms of my own

own creating—would to Heaven they were! but, alas! theſe things I have ſeen, and my heart has bled, that I had not power to relieve them.

Oh! I could tell ſuch tales of woe, drag forth ſuch vile ingratitude to light, that human nature would diſclaim the being who could practiſe it.

THE INGRATE.

DO you ſee that beautiful woman in that ſplendid equipage, ſurrounded by a train of ſervants? 'tis the thoughtleſs, ungrateful Amelia.

Behold that poor old woman who toils through the dirt unattended by any but her two lovely daughters, ſweet as opening flowers, and innocent as new-born infants; ſee on her venerable countenance what grief and deſpondency is imprinted! ſee the big tears roll down her furrowed cheeks! ſee ſhe enters an obſcure apartment, and a ſcanty meal is divided between her children and herſelf.

She looks at them by turns with ſuch maternal tenderneſs, ſuch anguiſh of heart, that ſhe ſeems to ſay, what will become of you, my ſweet children; how will you paſs through life when I am gone?

That poor old woman was Amelia's benefactreſs—but it is fit I ſhould tell my tale methodically.

Amelia was the daughter of a gentleman of ſmall fortune, who, beſides her, had nine other children:—Mrs. Ellwin was a diſtant relation of the family; ſhe was the wife of an opulent merchant, and their habitation was the habitation of philanthropy.

Amelia had received a tolerable education—ſhe was pretty in her perſon, chearful in her diſpoſition, and had a good ſhare of underſtanding; with theſe accompliſhments, Mrs. Ellwin thought it would be a pity for Amelia to be buried in obſcurity; ſhe gave her an invitation to her houſe, cloathed her genteely, and introduced her into ſuch company as ſhe thought would be moſt conducive to her future advancement in life. It was not long before Amelia's charms made a conqueſt of a gentleman of large fortune—he loved her; and her virtues were ſo kindly brought forward by Mrs. Ellwin, and all her little faults buried in oblivion, that he overlooked her want of fortune, made her his wife, and ſettled upon her 500l.

per annum jointure. Amelia had not long enjoyed this advancement, before Mr. Ellwin, having placed too great a dependance on the honour of a friend, loſt a large ſum of money; of conſequence his payments were not punctual, and he became a bankrupt.

He ſtruggled for ſome time againſt his adverſe fate, but at length died of a broken heart, and left his wife and lovely daughters no inheritance but poverty.

About this time Amelia became a widow:—but Amelia was now a fine lady—ſhe had no time to ſpend with poor relations, no money to ſpare to relieve the diſtreſſes of Mrs. Ellwin;

though her wedding cloaths, were purchaſed by that generous friend, and coſt near five hundred pounds, and that ſum had never been repaid.

Amelia is now juſt married again, and flying about in all the gaiety of heart which wealth and ſplendor can inſpire in a giddy mortal; while poor Mrs. Ellwin is ſinking under a load of anguiſh, unpitied and unthought of. Her once blooming, amiable daughters drooping like froſt-nipped bloſſoms, and neither Friendſhip, Humanity, nor Gratitude will reach forth a hand to cheer, revive, or ſave them.

But I am wandering from my intended route.

THE SUICIDES.

AS I approached Mr. Vellum's houſe an hearſe and ſix mourning coaches drove from the door.

Perhaps, ſaid I, the guardian is gone to give an account of his guardianſhip—and a very black account I fear it will be—however I will go in; perhaps I may learn ſomething concerning the death of Horace, or gain ſome intelligence which may be ſerviceable to the hapleſs Julietta.

I put on my ring, and a ſervant opening the door ſoon afterwards, I entered unperceived.

I went

I went into ſeveral rooms before I found any body likely to give me any ſatisfaction by their converſation. At length I entered a chamber, where, on an embroidered ſopha, lay Mr. Vellum, ſurrounded by magnificence——but, good Heavens! how changed from the man he once was—his face was ghaſtly pale, his eyes ſunk, yet their motion was ſo quick and fiery that they gave him the appearance of a fiend rather than an human being.

Oppoſite to him, in a penſive poſture, ſat a young woman in a deep mourning habit; her face was partly concealed with her handkerchief, but the part that appeared bore ſuch evident marks

of

of ſorrow, that a ſavage muſt have felt his heart moved with pity at the ſight.

He is gone, gone for ever, cried Vellum, ſtarting from the ſopha, and catching hold of the young lady's hand —he is gone, Heſter, and you know not half the anguiſh of my ſoul.

My dear father, ſaid ſhe, why will you give way to unavailing ſorrow? the kind Power who lent him to you has but recalled his own—it is the lot of mortality——then, why my, father, why will you offend your Creator by repining at his divine will?

O, Heſter, you do not know the dreadful circumſtances of your brother's death —alas!

—alas! my child, he ruſhed unbidden into the preſence of his Maker with multitudes of unrepented crimes upon his head.

Did he deſtroy himſelf? cried Heſter, the look of woe changing into that of inexpreſſible horror.—Oh! what could tempt him to the dreadful deed?

Heſter, my beloved daughter, I was his murderer, I was the cauſe of the horrid act.

Forbid it, gracious God, ſhe cried, claſping her hands and ſinking upon her knees—Oh! my father, recall thoſe ſhocking words; you was not, could not be, ſo inhuman.

Heſter,

Heſter, ſaid he, with a look of horrid firmneſs, I will unfold to you a tale which it is proper you ſhould know; I may not long continue with you.——I have been guilty of deeds which will make your tender heart ſhudder to acknowledge me as a parent—Oh! curſed avarice, it was that which led me to ſtain my ſoul with murder, and to ruin my child, my darling ſon.—For him and for thee I would have gained an empire, though I had waded to it through oceans of human blood: but to lead him by vile perſuaſions to agree to, and execute the accurſed plot, and plunge himſelf, for ſordid ore, to the loweſt abyſs of Hell.—Oh! it is more than I can bear to think of—my ſoul is at this moment ſuffering all the tortures

of

of the damned—ſcorpions, flames, and furies hang about me—Horace, dear murdered youth, well may you ſmile to ſee my tortures.

Was Horace murdered! Oh! inhuman wretch, cried Heſter—then where is my ſweet Julietta? have you murdered her too?

I hope ſhe ſtill lives, ſaid Vellum; and may your gentle friendſhip recall her wandering reaſon, for my cruelty has bereaved her of her ſenſes; and if ſhe is alive, ſhe is a poor, diſtreſſed lunatic.

Gracious Heaven! cried Heſter, burſting into a flood of tears, and leaning

ing her head upon the elbow of the ſopha.

The lovely girl, continued her father, is in a miſerable cottage, on one of her own eſtates, in Wiltſhire, where I have employed an old woman to watch her, and, by harſh treatment, prevent her returning to reaſon.

As to Horace he is no more.—When I ſent him abroad, as I ſaid, for education, your brother went with him—we laid the ſhocking plot before the veſſel ſailed; and one night as they were walking the deck together, your brother puſhed Horace into the ſea—the veſſel was ſailing before the wind, and he was loſt in a moment.

You,

You, my dear Heſter, I knew would be an obſtacle to theſe helliſh ſchemes, and for that reaſon I ſent you to France. —About three weeks ſince your brother had a thouſand pounds of me; and in a few days after, applied for more; it was then I diſcovered he had a propenſity to gaming——I remonſtrated with him on the folly of ſuch a purſuit, and refuſed him a ſupply—high words enſued—he accuſed me of being a murderer; of drawing him in to participate the crime, and then refuſing him a participation of the wealth I had by that means gained.—It is impoſſible for you to conceive the terrors that ſeized my mind during this converſation; I actually formed the reſolution of giving this darling of my ſoul into the hands of

juſtice,

juſtice, and thereby ſaving my own wretched life—but before I could execute my intention, I was alarmed by the diſcharge of a piſtol—I ran to your brother's room, and ſaw him weltering in his blood, a piſtol clenched in his hand.

Go, leave me, ſaid he, as I approached him; add not, by thy hateful preſence, to the horror of this moment—I thought, by dying, to ſhut out life and miſery together, to fly from the terrors of a reproaching conſcience; but, alas! my miſeries are but juſt beginning.

Oh! thou deteſted, wretched old man, continued he, drawing me forcibly towards him, thou art ignorant what a taſk thou haſt yet to perform:

Go, loſe not a moment, but uſe every method to reſtore that injured angel Julietta to her ſenſes—give her back her fortune—and do thou retire to ſome deſert—faſt, pray, and lay upon the cold ground—years and years ſpent in ſupplication will hardly gain that pardon you ſo much need.—There is! there is! an hereafter — I feel it now ruſh on my guilty ſoul.——You do not know how hard it is to die, to plunge at once into eternity.—Oh! murder, murder cannot be forgiven.

At that inſtant he expired with a groan, ſo hollow, that it ſtill vibrates in my ears.

I hear thee, Oh! thou guilty ſhade —I will obey thee.

Heſter, continued Vellum, I have ſent for you home, that you may adminiſter comfort to Julietta—here, take this paper, and go prepare for your journey; when you are ſeparated from me, open it; you will there find full inſtructions how to act—leave me, my child; I am now more compoſed, I may perhaps take ſome reſt.

Heſter gladly retired.

I ſaw from the agitation of her features, though ſhe could not but pity the diſtreſſes of her father's mind, it was impoſſible for her any longer to love him.

That taſk is over, ſaid Vellum, as

ſhe ſhut the door—now, what remains? —to pray for pardon.—Pardon for what?—Murder. Ah! that is not all; my ſoul is loaded with crimes.—Fraud, perjury, oppreſſion, are in the horrid catalogue!—the widows, the fatherleſs children whom I have oppreſſed, will riſe up in judgement againſt me.—Mercy—Oh! mercy juſt God!—but, wretch that I am, did I ever ſhew mercy—will that juſt Creator then ſhew mercy to me?—No—for I muſt appear at a tribunal where every one will be rewarded according to his works.

Oh that I was annihilated!—— that I had never lived—for the diſtraction of my mind is too mighty to be borne —I will not bear it—I will end my tor-

tures—my life is in my own power; and it is but to plunge at once into evils which cannot be more dreadful than this conſtant terror.—This is the inſtrument, ſaid he, taking a piſtol from his pocket.

I ſtepped forward, in order to prevent his fatal intention.

It ſhall be done quick, ſaid he—I will not languiſh—

I caught hold of his arm; but it was too late; he had pointed the piſtol to his temple—it went off, and he plunged in one moment into a dreadful eternity.

Oh! ſave him! ſave him! cried

Heſter, burſting into the room; he is not fit to die.

When ſhe ſaw the ſhocking cataſtrophe, ſhe uttered a ſcream of terror, and ſunk down upon the floor—the ſervants entered, and all was in an inſtant a ſcene of confuſion.

I thought I could gain no farther intelligence—and my ſpirits being greatly depreſſed by the occurrences of the day, I departed, determining in a few days to pay the gentle, unfortunate Heſter another viſit.

THE WIFE.

I WISH to go to Mrs. Melbourne's aſſembly, next week, if agreeable to you, my dear, ſaid a woman, who was walking through the park with a man whoſe appearance ſpoke him the gentleman.

She was a pretty-looking perſon; her countenance was open and engaging, and there was a mild air of tender melancholy diffuſed over it.

She led by the hand a beautiful girl, about four or five years old; and a ſmiling boy, ſeemingly a year or two older, was ſkipping, with ſteps as light as his

own innocent heart, before them—that man, ſaid I, muſt ſurely be happy.

I examined his countenance with a ſcrutinizing eye, and methought I read in it indifference and inattention; nay, he even ſeemed uneaſy in the company of his wife and lovely children.

—I ſhould like to go to Mrs. Melbourn's aſſembly, ſaid ſhe, putting her hand under his arm, and giving him a look of tenderneſs—it was a look I know not well how to deſcribe; it was a mixture of affection and gentle ſolicitude; it was the kind of look my Emma ever aſſumes when ſhe has any little favour to aſk, and it always carries with it ſuch perſuaſive eloquence, that for my ſoul I could

I could not refuſe, though ſhe were to requeſt the half of my fortune.

You want new cloaths too, I ſuppoſe, ſaid he, rather ſurlily.

I thought you might make it convenient to let me have my half-years ſtipend, ſaid ſhe, mildly; and you know, my dear, I never exceed it.

Very well, Madam, I hear enough of your œconomy, ſaid he, withdrawing his arm in anger; but I tell you I have no money for myſelf, and therefore cannot let you have any.—I do not ſee why you ſhould go to Mrs. Melbourn's; you may find employment and amuſement too

too in nurſing your brats; home is the fitteſt place for women.

I will not go, Mr. Selby, if you deſire I ſhould not.

There, now, make a merit of ſtaying at home to oblige me, when you cannot go becauſe I will not give you money to laviſh in finery. The education of your children coſts me ſo much that I intend for the future to reduce your allowance to half what it uſed to be.

Very well, my dear, you are the beſt judge of what you can afford; I ſhall always have your intereſt too much at heart to repine at being deprived of a few

few ſuperfluities which I can eaſily do without.

By this time they were arrived at Spring Gardens, where an handſome chariot was waiting.

I am engaged out this evening, ſaid he, handing her into the carriage.

Shall I ſee you at ſupper? ſaid ſhe, again aſſuming the look of ſolicitude; but it was far more anxious than the former.

No—perhaps I ſhall not return all night, ſaid he; and immediately left her without even the common form of civility.

Drive

Drive home, ſaid ſhe, to the coachman; and as the carriage moved, I ſaw her apply her handkerchief to her eyes.

Poor woman! ſaid I; at that inſtant feeling the drop of pity ſtart into my own.—Poor woman! thou art ſurrounded with wealth, have a number of ſervants, and, no doubt, for theſe advantages, are the object of envy in the eyes of many; but, alas! the poor cottager, whoſe manſion appears the habitation of poverty, who has juſt ſet by her wheel, and is feeding a number of cherry-cheeked, curly-pated, ragged children, whoſe huſband, returning from the labours of the field, accoſts her with words of kindneſs, kiſſes all his little prattlers round, and takes the youngeſt on his knee

knee to ſhare his homely ſupper, that humble cottager is happier far than you.

Theſe reflections had paſſed with ſuch rapidity through my brain, that Mr. Selby was ſtill in ſight.—I will follow thee, ſaid I, and ſee what has had power to charm thee from ſo ſweet, ſo gentle a companion.

Having got my ring on, I quickened my pace, and ſoon overtook him.

He proceeded to May Fair; when knocking at the door of a large houſe, a ſervant in a ſhowey livery opened it; when, taking the advantage of my inviſibility, I entered, and followed him through a magnificent ſuite of rooms into a drawing room.

THE MISTRESS.

SHE was an elegant-formed woman, rather above the middle ſize; her features were regular, and her complexion would have been dazzling, had it not been for an immoderate quantity of rouge which ſhe had laid on her face, which, in reality, required no art to make it lovely; her eyes were dark, lively, and piercing; and her hair, which was bright as golden thread, hung in wanton ringlets round her face and neck; her dreſs was ſtudiedly negligent, being only a white muſlin robe with ſmall ſilver ſprigs; it was faſtened round her ſlender waiſt with a velvet zone, ornamented with pearl; ſhe was

ſeated

ſeated by a table on which ſat a little French dog, which ſhe was careſſing as we entered.

My charming Laſſonia, ſaid he, running to her with eagerneſs, how tedious have the hours paſſed that kept me from you!

No doubt they have, ſaid ſhe, coldly evading his offered embrace; when you have made it two hours later than you promiſed.

My deareſt love, I could not avoid it, ſaid he, buſineſs of importance—

Oh you are a very prudent man, ſaid ſhe, ſcornfully; by all means buſineſs

ſhould

ſhould be attended to before pleaſure; but it is very well, Mr. Selby. I have waited at home to hear your paltry excuſe for breaking your word; but I have made an engagement which I cannot poſſibly break; my chair is waiting:—

She aroſe to leave the room.

My Angel, my dear Laſſonia, ſaid he, catching her hands, you ſurely do not mean to leave me; hear me but one word; I ſhould have been here much ſooner had I not overtaken my wife and children in the park, and ſhe begun teizing me for money.

And you gave it her? ſaid ſhe, with precipitation.

No,

No, my charmer, I have not given it ſo her, I have reſerved it for you; there is not a wiſh my Laſſonia can form but ſhall be immediately complied with—Emily had ſet her heart upon going to Mrs. Melbourn's aſſembly; but I knew my adored girl intended to be there, and did not wiſh to meet her; ſo I have deſired her not to go.

And have you brought me your wife's diamonds? ſaid ſhe.

No—but you ſhall have ſome, more valuable than thoſe—we will go out now, and you ſhall chuſe them at any price you pleaſe.

What, I ſuppoſe, ſaid ſhe, with a

look of contempt, your wife refuſed to part with them; and you, a poor, tame-ſpirited huſband, dared not contradict her; but I will have her jewels or none, ſo take your choice, Sir, either bring me the *meek*, *dutiful* Emily's diamonds, or never ſee me more.

What a pity it is, ſaid I, as I ſtood contemplating this ſcene, what a pity ſo lovely a form ſhould conceal ſo vile a heart; that woman appears a maſterpiece of nature, and yet draw aſide that beauteous veil, and there is ſuch foul deformity within, that we ſhrink with horror and diſguſt from the very object which at firſt view filled us with admiration.

I am

I am unwilling to refuſe you any thing, my ſweet girl, ſaid he; but indeed I do not know how to get the jewels; I have no plauſible pretext to aſk for them.

And is this your boaſted love? ſaid ſhe, this the fidelity, the fervent paſſion you have ſo repeatedly ſworn? am I to be denied ſo trifling a gratification becauſe you cannot bear a few tears from that proud minx your wife? have I not ſacrificed every thing for you? relinquiſhed reputation, honour, friends; and is this the return? this the gratitude I am to meet with? you would ſooner break my heart than comply with the ſmalleſt of my wiſhes.

During theſe reproaches ſhe had vented her paſſion by tears.

Do not thus diſtreſs yourſelf, my deareſt creature, ſaid Selby; you cut me to the ſoul by your reproaches; come, dry up your tears, and tell me in what can I oblige you?

Go and bring me Emily's diamonds this evening, ſaid ſhe.

I came to ſpend the night with you, my love, then do not ſend me from you; let us go out and purchaſe ſome other trinkets.

I will have nothing but the diamonds! exclaimed ſhe, in an agony of

paſſion; which reminded me of Othello in his jealous fury raving for the fatal handkerchief.

At length the infatuated Selby, finding it was in vain to attempt to ſooth her, and being, as he ſaid, unable to live without her, actually promiſed to go home and fetch the jewels for which ſhe expreſſed ſuch a deſire.

I was determined to go with him, and haſtily ſtepping down ſtairs before him, ſlipped unperceived into a hackney coach which he had ſent for, and was waiting for him at the door—a ſhort time brought us to Gower ſtreet.

The RECEPTION.

THIS is kind indeed, my love, ſaid Mrs. Selby, meeting him with a ſmile as he entered the parlour; I was afraid you would not have returned ſo ſoon.

Pſhaw, ſaid he, throwing himſelf into a chair; I do not ſuppoſe you will be ſo pleaſed when I tell you the buſineſs which brought me home.

If it is any thing which will make you uneaſy, my dear, ſaid ſhe, I ſhall certainly regret it; but if it only concerns myſelf I ſhall regret nothing which gives me the pleaſure of your company.

You

You are a good girl, Emily, ſaid he, taking her hand—and methought at that inſtant he repented the taſk he had undertaken—but it was a momentary reflection.

I have occaſion for a large ſum of money, ſaid he, to make up a payment, and I have no poſſible means of raiſing it.

Good God! cried ſhe, turning pale with apprehenſion, are your circumſtances ſo bad then?

Make no inquiries, ſaid he, but conſider if you can form any plan to relieve me.

How much do you want, my love?

About two thouſand pounds.

I dare ſay my father will lend you ſuch a trifle, rather than you ſhould be diſtreſſed.

So, Madam, ſaid he, you would adviſe me to apply to your father, and make my misfortunes the talk of the town.—You ſay you love me, Emily.

Heaven knows I do moſt fervently.

Then, to prove it, bring me your jewels, they will procure me the money I want.

You

You cannot raiſe ſo large a ſum without my mother's alſo; and I ſhould not wiſh to part with them.

A very pretty declaration indeed, Madam; you value your mother's memory more than your huſband's peace of mind.

Oh! do not ſay ſo harſh a word, ſaid ſhe; I will bring the jewels—had I the univerſe at my command it would be of no value to me when put in competition with your happineſs.

She left the room, and ſoon returned with the jewels.

Here they are, ſaid ſhe; would to Heaven

Heaven every desire which you form may be as easily obtained.

He looked them over.

These are not all, said he—

A blush of confusion passed over the pale face of the trembling Emily.

I have indeed reserved some, said she; but do not be angry, I cannot part with the first tokens of your love; I cannot part with your picture.

I must have all, said he, impatiently.

The afflicted wife drew from her throbbing bosom a miniature picture set

ſet with diamonds, and a ſmall, but valuable locket, emblamatical of love and peace; he took them from her—

Leave me the picture, ſaid ſhe—take the diamonds; but, for pity's ſake, take not that dear, firſt pledge of your love.—The picture will not enhance the value to any but me.

I cannot ſtay to take it out, ſaid he, putting the jewels into his pocket, and giving the poor, weeping Emily a ſlight kiſs; he ſnatched up his hat and inſtantly returned to the vile Laſſonia.

I had been too much diſguſted with that woman's behaviour to entertain a thought

thought of returning with him, therefore, taking off my ring, when I left the houſe, I walked toward home.

THE

THE INFORMATION.

BEING at the play with a friend ſome months after, I obſerved Laſſonia in a box oppoſite to that in which I ſat, adorned with the very jewels which Selby had obtained from his affectionate wife.

Who that ſees that woman, ſaid I to my friend, but would think her the lovelieſt work of creation.

I have been admiring her for ſome time, ſaid he; can you give me any information concerning her? I have ſeen her once before, and am quite captivated with her beauty; if her mind is equal

to

to her perſon, I could freely devote my life to ſuch a woman.

There is no more compariſon between her mind and her form, ſaid an old gentleman, in a black coat and a ſnug round wig, who ſat juſt behind us—there is no more compariſon between them, ſaid he, than there is between an angel of Light and a dæmon of Hell.

Do you know her, Sir, ſaid my friend, turning haſtily round.

I do, young man, ſaid he; and to guard you from the effects of her pernicious charms, if you will ſup with me after the play, I will tell you a tale that ſhall make you hate her.

When

When the play was over we adjourned to a tavern, and after ſupper our new friend gave us the hiſtory of Laſſonia.

Miſs Freeman and Miſs Eldridge, ſaid he, were the daughters of two opulent tradeſmen; their fathers were united in the cloſeſt bonds of amity. Emily Freeman and Laſſonia Eldridge were play-mates in infancy, educated at the ſame ſchool, and contracted for each other the affection of ſiſters.—Emily had juſt entered her ſixteenth year, when ſhe was called from ſchool to attend an excellent mother, who was haſtily advancing to that "bourne from whence no traveller returns." Laſſonia would not be ſeparated from her friend on this trying occaſion, and Mrs. Freeman ſoon after

after paying the debt of nature, ſhe was retained by Mr. Freeman as a companion, whoſe vivacity would prevent Emily from too frequently muſing on her recent loſs.

Mr. Selby became acquainted with the lovely friends before Emily had attained her eighteenth year—her ſenſe and penetration charmed him; and her perſon, having then all the attractions of blooming youth, he declared himſelf her lover—he frequently laughed and romped with Laſſonia, but never entertained a thought of love, as her conduct in general was ſo flighty, and her converſation ſo trifling, that though it was impoſſible to avoid admiring her beauty, ſhe

ſhe had not one requiſite calculated to create eſteem.

About this time Mr. Eldridge was taken ill—the phyſicians feared a conſumption, and adviſed a journey to Montpelier—Laſſonia accompanied her father, and during their abſence Emily gave her hand to Mr. Selby. Mr. Eldridge recovered his health, and they reviſited England; when, no mention being made of Laſſonia's returning to Mrs. Selby, ſhe continued with her father to ſuperintend his family. Two years paſſed on in delightful harmony between Mr. and Mrs. Selby, in which time ſhe preſented him with a boy and a girl. During that period the father of Laſſonia died inſolvent, and ſhe was reduced to

the neceſſity of going to ſervice, as there was not the leaſt proviſion for her future ſubſiſtence.

It was then the generous, diſintereſted Emily offered her an aſylum in her houſe, appointed her an apartment, a ſervant to attend her, and ſupplied her with cloaths and money from her own private purſe.

Laſſonia had not long been an inmate in the houſe of her friend, before, envious of her felicity, ſhe determined to imbitter it by alienating the affection of Selby from his truly amiable wife—Selby was young, and fond of variety; his paſſion for Emily was greatly abated by poſſeſſion, and though he almoſt ve-

nerated

nerated her for her virtues, the charms of her faithleſs friend enflamed his heart, and he eagerly caught at the frequent opportunities which ſhe intentionally gave him to plead his paſſion.

Laſſonia is a proud woman; her ſituation was irkſome, though every favour from Emily was conferred in ſo delicate a manner that an indifferent ſpectator would have imagined her the perſon obliged.

She was likewiſe an artful woman; ſhe ſoon gained ſuch an aſcendancy over Selby, that while Emily ſcarcely dared to hint her wiſhes, Laſſonia demanded with authority, and gained every deſire. Yet of ſo gentle, unſuſpicious, a temper

was Mrs. Selby, and ſo great a confidence did ſhe place in the honour of her friend and her huſband, that though Laſſonia remained in the family near a twelvemonth after her connection with Selby, ſhe never once thought ſuch a thing could happen. She frequently lamented to her treacherous friend the alteration in her huſband's behaviour, but ſhe never ſuſpected her as the cauſe of her uneaſineſs.

But Laſſonia now found it neceſſary to remove from Mrs. Selby's, to prevent her ſhame from becoming public; ſhe told Emily that ſhe was diſtreſſed at being ſo great an incumberance to her, and that having an opportunity of going abroad with a lady, who wanted a companion,

panion, ſhe would embrace it, and endeavour to contribute to her own ſupport. By this conduct ſhe laid a plan to prevent returning to the family, which ſhe predetermined not to do before ſhe left it.

Mrs. Selby loaded her with obligations at parting. She retired to a ſmall houſe about twenty miles from town, which Selby had provided for her reception, and where ſhe remained three years, Selby ſpending great part of his time with her.

About ſix months ſince ſhe came to town, aſſumed the name of Green, took an elegant houſe, and ſet up a carriage. Mrs. Selby hearing of her arrival, and

ſuppoſing ſhe was married, requeſted me, who at that time was ignorant of the circumſtances I have now related, to go with her and pay Laſſonia a morning viſit.

We were ſhewn into the drawing room by a ſervant, who informed us his miſtreſs would be down in a few minutes, but that ſhe was then dreſſing.

How agreeably ſurpriſed my dear Laſſonia will be, ſaid Emily, to find I am the lady who wanted to ſpeak with her —for ſhe had ſent up no name.

We were chatting on indifferent ſubjects, when a child ran into the room, crying, I will have papa's picture; I won't

won't break it indeed; a maid following him in; he ran to Emily, whoſe arms were extended to receive him, and throwing the picture into her lap, judge her feelings when ſhe ſaw the portrait of Mr. Selby, which ſhe had given him but two days before with the greateſt regret, imagining him in want of money. Her feelings overpowered her, and ſhe fell lifeleſs on the floor. The cries of the ſervant alarmed the family, and Laſſonia, thinking ſome misfortune had happened to her child, ruſhed into the room followed by Selby himſelf.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the ſcene that enſued on the recovery of Emily—Laſſonia raved, Mrs. Selby wept, and

Selby appeared motionleſs as a ſtatue.—As ſoon as Emily was able to walk, I took her hand and led her to the carriage. Upon her return home, her fainting fits returned; ſhe paſſed a night of inconceivable diſtreſs, for Selby never came near her; and in the morning ſhe was in a violent fever. I then went in purſuit of the perfidious huſband; but, as the ſuffering ſaint deſired, forbore to reproach him.

I found him, and he returned with me to her.

She beheld him approach with a faint ſmile—It is kind, my Selby, ſaid ſhe, to come and receive the parting ſigh of her who ſo long has been a barrier to

your happineſs; indeed I did not know, or I never would have viſited my happy rival—I never thought your love was divided, and the certainty of it came ſo ſudden upon my heart, that, weak and unprepared as it was, it could not bear the ſhock—take care of my children, ſaid ſhe—adieu, my love; my heart may break, but my tongue will never reproach you.

Her diſorder hourly increaſed; a delirium enſued; and before the next morning ſhe breathed her laſt, invoking bleſſings on the head of her faithleſs huſband and treacherous friend.

THE DISSERTATION.

IT is ſuch women as Laſſonia who caſt an odium on the whole ſex; and ſuch women are not only objects of contempt but deteſtation. I am not of opinion that women would never degenerate into vice, were they not at firſt ſeduced by man; certain I am, though my heart achs at the idea, that there are many women who are abandoned to all manner of wickedneſs entirely through the depravity of their inclinations.—Oh! how my ſoul riſes with indignation to ſee the faireſt works of the Creator's hand ſo far forget their native dignity as to glory in actions which debaſe them beneath the loweſt reptile that crawls

crawls upon the earth! To ſee a woman loaded with ornaments which are the wages of guilt, and exulting in the badges of her diſhonour; to ſee her admitted into all public places, and rudely preſſing before the meek and virtuous —I could ſtrip her of her gaudy trappings, and, to bring her to a juſt ſenſe of her infamous conduct, feed her upon bread and water, till convinced of the neceſſity of repentance, ſhe ſhould gladly embrace the moſt ſervile employment, and accept the meaneſt apparel, rather than return to her former life of vice and diſſipation.

How many families have been ruined by licentious women! How many virtuous wives have ſunk, broken hearted,

to

to the grave! how many innocent orphans have been ſent portionleſs into the world, through their diabolical machinations! and, alas! (I ſhudder as the thought occurs) how many wretched women, forgetful of their marriage vows, have relinquiſhed a tender huſband, a family of children, whoſe innocent careſſes ſhould have linked her heart inſeparably to their father, and thrown herſelf into the arms of an abandoned libertine!—let not ſuch a woman plead ſeduction——a married woman muſt, by her conduct give ſome encouragement before the moſt profligate man would dare offend her ear with a declaration of love; and weak, very weak, muſt be her repulſes, if he ventures to perſevere in his impious purſuit.

From

From the inmoſt receſſes of my ſoul do I pity the unhappy girl who, betrayed by the impulſe of affection, falls a prey to an inſidious villian, and, abandoned by her ſeducer, is expoſed to the ſcorn and contempt of the world—Oh! how my heart has been wrung to ſee poor girls who are ſcarcely paſt their childhood, whoſe misfortune it has been to have wicked adviſers, ſo early initiated into the ſchool of vice. Their tender frames, which once perhaps, by kind, paternal care, were ſhielded from the winds of Heaven—now defenceleſs, in the moſt inclement ſeaſon expoſed to noxious damps and pinching cold, and when they moſt ſtand in need of conſolation, when bowed almoſt to the grave with want, diſeaſe, and ſhame, to ſee

them

them reſt their wearied bones upon the cold damp pavement, and lay their aching heads upon the ſteps of an houſe where a woman dwells, whoſe heart is a thouſand times more guilty than theirs, who ſins without remorſe, and riots in wealth and luxury.

I never ſee the poor nightly wanderers that infeſt our ſtreets, but, ſpite of my endeavours to the contrary, the tear of anguiſh will ſteal unbidden to my eye.

Poor ſouls! I often ſay, poor unhappy creatures, would to Heaven I had a fortune capacious as my heart, that I might ſnatch you from perdition, and teach you the road to everlaſting felicity.

I would

I would guard you from the insults of the world; I would cherish you, listen to all your tales of sorrow, and join my tears with yours, till we had washed away the stains of guilt, and taught you "that to be good, is to be happy."

Oh! my fair countrywomen, turn not away from the plaints of misery; scorn not the daughters of affliction; for, if by clemency and humanity you could draw one miserable object from the thorny paths of vice, and restore her to peace with her own soul, you would do an act more acceptable in the sight of your Creator, than the man who bestows thousands for the endowment of an hospital—the first action must proceed from innate goodness of the heart; the last may

may from ſelf-love—a man may do a public act of benevolence to perpetuate his name, and dignify himſelf with the title of generous; but that pure charity which leads us to forgive the failings of our fellow creatures, chear the deſponding heart, and wipe the grief-ſwoln eye of an obſcure individual, muſt be the reſult of religion; it is a ſort of benevolence which gratifies the heart in performing good deeds, but bluſhes whenever thoſe actions are repeated—It feels the moſt exalted pleaſure in relieving a diſtreſſed fellow-creature, but is pained to receive acknowledgements.

THE ARREST.

I WILL go and pay the diſconſolate Heſter a viſit, ſaid I, one morning as I was rambling near Chelſea. I bent my ſteps toward her habitation; but had not proceeded far before I obſerved a young man, whoſe dreſs had formerly been genteel, but was now ſhabby in the extreme; his hair had once been dreſſed, but it might have been ſome three weeks or a month ſince; his coat was *de couleur de puce*, but much the worſe for wear, as the elbows diſcovered a very fine, but dirty, ſhirt; his once ſatin waiſtcoat was threadbare and greaſy, his breeches looſe and ragged at the knees; a pair of dirty ſilk ſtockings,

ornamented with here and there an hole, hung in a ſlovenly manner about his legs; and the ſable fril of his ſhirt, that peeped from his breaſt, was trimmed with the fineſt edging—That man has once been a coxcomb, ſaid I; for I always judge when I ſee the remains of finery put on careleſſly or disfigured with dirt, that the wearer has formerly been extravagant in his dreſs.

I approached the tattered beau in order to take a view of his perſon, when I diſcovered the features of my old acquaintance Mr. Wouldbe.

And this is the end of ignorant pride, oſtentation, and folly, ſaid I—no doubt you would now be glad of a friend to adminiſter

adminiſter to thoſe wants which henceforth you will learn to pity in others—but I fear your conduct has been ſuch that you have no friends to apply to.

The thought was ſcarcely paſſed before two diſagreeable-looking fellows came up, and ſhewing the trembling Wouldbe a bit of parchment, he was forced to ſurrender himſelf their priſoner.

Juſt at that time a young man of faſhion paſſing, and recollecting Wouldbe, accoſted him with heigh! Jack, what! come to this already! I thought you would have held it out a little longer—ha! ha! what a rueful figure! —all out at the elbows eh!

A truce with your ſneers, Sir, ſaid Wouldbe, aſſuming an air of importance, I ſtand in need of twenty pounds immediately—you have frequently made me offers of ſervice; lend me that ſum, and I ſhall be obliged to you.

Ah! Jack, ſaid the other, that air and manner won't do now, it did very well while the *l'argent* laſted, and you was a gentleman at large; but now you are again plain Jack Wouldbe, the Cabinet-maker; you muſt learn to bow, cringe, and mind your buſineſs—I am ſorry it goes ſo hard with you; but depend upon it, this will always be the caſe with young men of trifling fortunes, who ape the manners, and launch into extravagancies, which are only becom-

ing

ing the irſuperiors—I would lend you the money with all my heart, but I know you have no way to repay it, and are too proud to go to work; therefore you had better ſubmit to your fate with a good grace.

The poor creſt fallen Wouldbe walked away with his diſagreeable companions, and the ſtranger addreſſed himſelf to me—that young man, Sir, ſaid he, was the ſon of an induſtrious tradeſman, who by ſtrict attention to buſineſs ſcraped together about three or four thouſand pounds; at his death this money was left for his only ſon, who was then getting a little education at a cheap ſchool in the country.

When fifteen years old, he was apprenticed to a capital Cabinet-maker; a very handſome premium was given with him; but he was too much of the gentleman to attend to buſineſs, and when he came of age he aſſumed the dreſs and manners of a man of faſhion; expenſive amuſements, treats, balls, and the retinue of diſſipation and folly were eagerly attended to—but this would not laſt long; it is over now; and even if he makes friends to get from his preſent confinement, I know of no method he can purſue for future ſubſiſtence.

Such young men as theſe, ſaid I, by their folly are often involved in difficulties, which, in hopes of extricating themſelves from, they hurry to the gaming table,

table, and finding their expectations fruſtrated there alſo, as the laſt reſource, betake themſelves to a black crape, a good horſe, and a piſtol.—How careful ſhould parents and guardians be to inſtill into the minds of youth of narrow fortunes, meekneſs, humility, and induſtry! the leaſt tendency to thoughtleſs extravagance, in either ſex ought to be ſeverely chaſtiſed; ſince pride, and a paſſion for expenſive pleaſures, which they have no laudable method to obtain, has hurried thouſands into actions which imbitter the laſt hours of life with poverty, ſhame, and remorſe.

As I finiſhed theſe remarks, I looked up, expecting an anſwer from my companion; but whether my diſcourſe was

too grave, or whether it touched his feelings, or whether ſome other cauſe had occaſioned him to leave me, I know hot, but he was gone; and on my turning round to look for him, I ſaw he was haſtily proceeding towards town.

How eaſy it is, ſaid I, for a man to blame a conduct in others which he is eagerly purſuing himſelf; perhaps a few years may reduce that young man to the ſame ſituation in which he now ſmiles to ſee Wouldbe—experience is undoubtedly beſt when purchaſed; but Wouldbe has, I fear, paid an exorbitant price for his.

I was now oppoſite Vellum's houſe.

THE RETRIBUTION.

HAVING entered, by means of my ring, I proceeded unſeen to Heſter's apartment—ſhe was greatly altered ſince the death of her father; a ſickly langour had taken poſſeſſion of her features—ſhe looked anxious and fatigued.

I wonder Harper is not returned, ſaid ſhe, to a young woman who was with her: I hope the dear Julietta is not worſe.

She had hardly pronounced the words before a poſt chaiſe ſtoped at the door, and, in a few moments, the injured orphan entered, leaning on the arm of an

elderly

elderly woman; an univerſal trembling ſeized on Heſter when ſhe beheld the ravages which ſickneſs and ill uſage had made on the form of her lovely friend: ſhe led her to a ſopha, dropped on her knees before her, and, gazing at her with a look that ſpoke the keen anguiſh of her ſoul, took her thin hands in hers, and burſt into tears.

Do you not know me, my ſweet friend? ſaid ſhe, after a long and affecting ſilence; will you not ſpeak to me, Julietta?

Heſter, ſaid ſhe, bowing her head forward, and leaning her cheek upon that of her weeping friend, Heſter, why are you ſo ſorrowful? and why are you dreſſed

dreſſed in black? are *you* an orphan, Heſter?

Oh! had it pleaſed Heaven I had been, cried Heſter, earneſtly, rather than you, dear, injured angel, had been reduced to this hapleſs ſtate.

Alas! ſaid Julietta, why would you wiſh to be an orphan, to have a cruel guardian, to loſe your brother, to eat dry bread and drink cold water, and lie upon a wretched bed of ſtraw? you could not bear it, dear Heſter; you would die of a broken heart—for my part, I am uſed to it; I can bear it very well; then let me return to my little hut again—if my guardian knew I had left it, he would be very angry.

And

And have you ſuffered all this? cried Heſter, weeping bitterly. Oh! Julietta, you never ſhall return to that ſad place again; your cruel guardian is dead.

Dead! cried Julietta, raiſing her hands and eyes in a ſupplicating manner; then Heaven have mercy on him.

And what do you think of the poor girl's caſe? ſaid Heſter, as ſhe re-entered the room with Dr. M——, after they had perſuaded Julietta to go to bed.

The doctor gave her great hopes that kind and affectionate treatment would ſoon entirely reſtore her reaſon, which he imagined was already beginning to return.

Could

Could I but ſee that happy day, ſaid ſhe, and deliver her fortune into her own hands, I ſhould have no farther buſineſs in this world.

How ſo, my young friend? ſaid the doctor, with a look of ſurpriſe; I think you have a great deal of buſineſs in the world yet; why ſure, with all your goodneſs and accompliſhments, you would not ſhut yourſelf up in a convent?

Why no, ſaid ſhe; I am not a ſufficient convert to the catholic religion to imagine it abſolutely neceſſary to ſhut ourſelves up within the walls of a priſon to avoid the temptations of the world; but, I think, a perſon may in ſolitude better practiſe thoſe virtues ſo neceſſary

to our well doing hereafter, than in the noiſe and hurry of the more buſy ſcenes of life.—By ſolitude, I do not mean to retire to a deſert, and ſhut myſelf from the converſe and ſociety of my fellow creatures; I mean a calm retirement, far from folly and diſſipation, where I may conſult my own heart on the propriety and equity of all my actions, without incurring the ſneers and ridicule of the world. As to the wealth which my poor unhappy father hoarded, it does not belong to me; it is the property of the widow and the fatherleſs.

Here her tears interrupted her.

After this declaration, Doctor, ſhe continued, you will not be ſurpriſed at

my reſolution of retiring from the gay ſcenes of life; and, I flatter myſelf, I ſhall in time regain that ſerenity of mind a ſeries of uncommon trials have robbed me of.

The doctor was too much affected to reply; he preſſed her hand, ſtruggled hard to ſuppreſs a riſing tear, and making a haſty bow, left the room.

A few weeks reſtored Julietta to reaſon, health and ſpirits; when Heſter, having reſigned her fortune to her own care, and made ample retribution of thoſe ſums her father had appropriated to his own uſe, during the inſanity of his ward, retired to a village, in a county far diſtant from London, and

ſpent

ſpent the remainder of her life in adminiſtering to the wants of the helpleſs and diſtreſſed.

Her friendſhip for Julietta ceaſed but with her life; and many ſummers has that amiable girl ſpent with her, uniting in every action of benevolence, and ſhedding peace and plenty around them; the villagers adored them while living, and mourned with unaffected ſorrow when deprived by death of their benefactreſſes.

THE CITY HEIRESS.

I WILL have the moſt elegant that is to be had, Mamma, cried a young lady, as ſhe came out of a carriage, and ran into a miliner's ſhop, which I had entered to buy ſome little preſents for Harriet and Lucy.

Do not let me detain you from waiting on the ladies, ſaid I to the miſtreſs of the ſhop, for I was willing to ſee to what lengths this girl's extravagance would take her.

I want a bouquet, Mrs. Frippery, ſaid ſhe; come, ſhew me ſome of the handſomeſt you have.

The counter was in an inſtant over-ſpread with roſes, carnations, lilies, jaſmine, and other flowers innumerable; it looked like the temple of Flora; but I ſhould by no means have taken the young lady for the divinity of the place, as ſhe was a little ſwarthy figure, with ſmall black eyes, a good deal marked with the ſmall pox, and ſomething inclined to be crooked. — Nature might have made her really ſo, but her ſtay-maker had found out a method, in a great meaſure, to hide the defect; her hair was dreſſed to the extremity of the faſhion; her bonnet, which was large, and loaded with trimming, placed on the left ſide of her head; a train of rich ſatin ſwept the ground as ſhe walked; the prominence of her handkerchief almoſt hid

her chin; and her cheeks wore the tints of ſome of the beſt rouge.—It is aſtoniſhing, ſaid I, as I ſat looking at her, that a woman to whom nature has not been laviſh in perſonal attractions, ſhould take ſuch pains by their *outre* manner of dreſſing, entirely to obſcure the few charms with which they are endued, and make their defects conſpicuous.

I was rouſed from theſe reflections by the Lady's bidding five guineas for as many flowers.

But really, Mrs. Frippery, ſaid ſhe, have you none more elegant?

Why, my dear Miſs, ſaid the woman, I have one, but it is poſitively beſpoke by

by the Dutcheſs of Melvin, and it likewiſe comes rather high :—it cannot go out of my ſhop under ſeven guineas—though there are not more flowers in it than in the one you have choſen.

The flowers were produced, the Lady inſiſted on having them, and the money was paid.

It is a doubt with me, ſaid I, whether the poor mortal whoſe induſtry and ingenuity formed thoſe pretty ornaments, ſcarcely earns more than enough to ſupport nature; and yet this thoughtleſs girl has paid ſeven guineas for them, merely becauſe they were beſpoke by the Dutcheſs of Melvin.

Juſt as the Ladies were about leaving the ſhop, a ſmart man, dreſſed like an officer, whoſe language ſpoke him hibernian, deſired to look at ſome point ruffles; he advanced to the counter at which the young Lady ſat, and while he ſeemed buſy at looking at the ruffles, took an opportunity to ſlip a letter into her hand unperceived by her mother.—I ſhall again have recourſe to my ring, ſaid I, for, if I am not miſtaken, that man is a fortunehunter.

That young Lady, ſaid Mrs. Frippery, as they drove from the door, is the only child of Alderman Fig—ſhe is heireſs to a vaſt fortune.

Two fat old gentlemen paſſing juſt then, ſhe informed me that one of them was Mr. Fig himſelf.

I had made my purchaſes, ſo I ſtepped out of the ſhop and followed the Alderman.

The DISAPPOINTMENT.

I HAVE been out on purpoſe to get an appetite, ſaid Mr. Fig ;—I think it was the largeſt turtle I ever ſaw ; and my friend Dip always has his turtles ſo well dreſſed, that I long for the hour of dinner. I will juſt ſtep home and change my wig, and be with you again immediately.

Then

Then this is the time, ſaid I, for me to get admiſſion.—I put my hand in my pocket for my ring—but it was gone—I ſearched every pocket diligently, but no ring could I find. I returned to the miliner's ſhop, and from thence home—ſearched my bed—had every room in the houſe ſwept; but it was all to no purpoſe.—I never ſaw it again.

And pray, Mr. Inquiſitor, what became of the City Heireſs?

Upon my word, Madam, I never heard.

FINIS.

Speedily will be publiſhed,

In OCTAVO,

WITH A FRONTISPIECE,

A

COLLECTION OF POEMS,

By the AUTHOR of this WORK.

BRITISH
11 FE 82
MUSEUM

MY ſons, I come, thus clad in burniſh'd arms,
For the rude times are fraught with dire alarms;
Fain wou'd I caſt aſide my ſhining ſpear
And peace invoke to hail the pregnant year;
At early matin rouze the ploughman's toil,
And bleſs the promiſe of a fruitful ſoil;
Watch the white canvaſs on the ſwelling tide,
The dimpling wave of ocean covering wide.—
The olive better wou'd adorn my face
Than nodding plumes the blazing helmets grace.
But my proud foe, fluſh'd with his plunder'd gains,
Inſults my embaſſy, and peace diſdains;
In vain hope my children to beguile
To aid his plan'd invaſion of our iſle.
Such weak temerity my ſoul derides,
For when did Britain nurture parricides.
Whilſt my proud flag blocks up the fleets of Spain,
Whilſt in my ports Batavia's ſhips remain,
Subdued by him, whoſe deeds of high renown
Gain'd him the honour'd name of CAMPERDOWN.
While even now, urged on by ardent zeal,
All ranks contribute tow'rds the public weal;
Should France ev'n now her deſp'rate legions pour,
Favour'd by night, ſhould they profane the ſhore,
BRITANNIA would diſdain her ſex's fears,
Whilſt thus encirc'l'd by her Volunteers,
The brave defenders of their native fields,
Who in her right liſt forty thouſand ſhields;
Ye valiant brothers, 'tis a glorious cauſe,
Your wives, your children, and your country's laws;—
Who will not cheriſh theſe deſerves to die,
Oblivion hide his name and infamy.
Not ſo the hero ſhall reſign his breath,
Who in his country's battle meets his death;
What tho' the braz'n records fade in ruſt,
What tho' the marble crumble all to duſt,
The aged ſire his valiant deeds ſhall quote,
And liſping infants prattle them by rote;
The hiſtoric ſiſter too record his name,
And future ages emulate his fame.